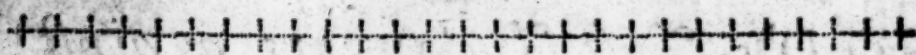


*Dreadful News from Taunton-
Dean.*



G O D's J U D G M E N T S

A G A I N S T

Jealous Persons.

B E I N G

The whole Account of the most
Horrid M U R D E R

Committed by

Sir William Watts, K

Who most cruelly murdered his Lady,
and two imall Children.

For which he was tried and cast at the last Assizes
and Executed for the same.

*With the Solemn Declaration he made at the Place
of Execution.*

And the Substance of a Sermon preached by the
Rev. Dr. R U S S E L L.



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GOD's Just Judgments against Jealous Persons.

IN the Parish of Milverton, near Taunton, in Somersetsshire, lived one Sir William Watts, a gentleman of a very good estate, about 38 years of age. He married a very beautiful young woman in that neighbourhood, by whom he had 3 children, and they lived very lovingly together for several years, 'till the Devil raised such a spirit of jealousy in him, that he could not rest day nor night : For the love that he formerly bore to her turned into hatred and malice ; and oftentimes he would beat and abuse her in a very inhuman manner, saying, The children she bare to him were all of them bastards, and none of his ; and would often threaten to murder her, and her bastards, to the great grief of the poor tender mother, who would often strive to pacify him, affirming, that she was as innocent as the child unborn ; but all was to no purpose.

One morning as he was walking out in the fields, studying how he might accomplish his wicked design to murder them, the Devil appear'd to him, in the shape of a nobleman, and saluted him in a very complacent manner, and after some little discourse, looking very earnestly on him, he said, " Sir, I perceive you are under some trouble, and therefore, pray tell me what it is, and I

will soon put you in a way to get rid of it. You think that your wife is a whore, and your children are all bastards, which I know to be true; for mine were the very same; but I soon got rid of that trouble; for I went home and murdered them all. And as I had a good estate beyond the seas, and a ship of my own lying ready to sail, I went on board, and got off, where I have lived ever since, very happy. Now, if you'll be ruled by me, go home, and if your wife is gone abroad send your servant-maid to call her mistress, and then kill the three children, and the whore your wife, when she comes home; and then come again to this place to me: Let nothing dismay you for I will take you on board my ship, where you shall live happy, and enjoy all the pleasures this life can afford.

Then shewing two large bags, one of silver, and the other of gold; the wicked wretch took the Devil's advice, and went home with a heart full of most barbarous and bloody cruelty; where finding none but his servant-maid, as the Devil had told him, he sent her to call her mistress: Then taking the bloody knife in his hand, goes up stairs, where he found his three children lying fast asleep in each other's arms; and taking the youngest (being a boy) by the hair of his head, cut his throat from ear to ear, and then laid him on the floor; then taking the youngest girl, he cut her throat in the same manner; while the eldest crying out in a most tender manner, "Oh my dear father; why do you kill my dear brother and sister —"

He told her, she should die in the same manner; With that she fell upon her knees, and begged of him for God's sake that he would give her time to say her prayers: to which he consented.

The Child's Prayer.

O Eternal God, and most merciful Father, take pity on me thy child, and save me from the hands of my cruel father, who hath already killed my dear brother and sister; and preserve my dear mother out of his wicked hands, and send thy angel to hold his bloody hand that he proceed no further in his bloody cruelty.

And while she was praying there was heard a mighty voice, crying out, *Hold thy hand, thou bloody-minded wretch, the Lord hath heard the prayers of the innocent child, whom thou seekest to destroy; thou hast slain already two innocent babes, whose blood cryeth for vengeance against thee, and thou shalt be tormented in everlasting flames; for the Devil, who hath deceived thee, can do thee no service at all.*

In the mean time the poor unfortunate wife came in, and hearing a noise, she ran up stairs, and seeing her two babes lie bleeding on the ground, she began to make an outcry, he running to her, with a long, sharp-pointed knife, stabbed her three times in the body, and then cut her throat from ear to ear.

By this time the neighbours, hearing the noise, came running in, and found him standing in the midst of the room, and not having power to move, they immediately seized on him, and he

was sent to Taunton-jail, and tried and found guilty at the last assizes, and deservedly executed for the same.

His Confession.

I Was born in the county of Somerset, in the parish of Milverton, near Taunton-Dean, of very honest parents, whose care was to bring me up in the fear and service of God, having no other child besides me; they dying left me a very good estate, and I married a very beautiful young woman in the neighbourhood, tho' much inferior to me in birth and fortune. By her I had three fine children; but her beauty proved my ruin, and brought me thro' my own jealousy, at last to this ignominious death I am going to suffer. — I pray God preserve all people from jealousy, and not suffer them to be misled by the Devil, who made me many a great promise, telling me to kill my wife and children, and perswading me That she was guilty of defiling my bed, and other heinous offences against me.

After desiring the prayers of all good christians, and forewarning others by his example, he was turned off.

The Substance of a Sermon Preached upon that Occasion by the Rev. Mr. Russell.

James i. 13, 14, 15. Let no man say, when he is tempted, I am tempted of God, for God cannot be tempted to evil, neither tempteth he any man; but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then, when lust hath conceived, it brings forth sin; and sin when 'tis finished, bringeth forth death.

MY Beloved, the words of the text ought to warn us to speedy repentance, so that we may be prepared for our latter end, by amending our lives, and living soberly, righteously, and godly in this present life, that we may be made partakers of eternal happiness in that life to come, and indeed, if men were so wise as to consider their latter end, it would be the chief motive to make them leave their sins and wickedness, considering that the soul never dies, but must have a being to all eternity ; and that there are but two places for it to go, either to Heaven or Hell. Therefore, my beloved, let me earnestly intreat you to think often of your latter end, and prepare for eternal happiness, or else you will certainly be most miserable. *Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil day comes not, nor the years approach, wherein thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them.* Eccles. xii, 1. Man that is born of a woman has but a short time to live ; and it highly concerns us to make good use of our time, and to improve it, to the best advantage of our souls ; *For, Beloved, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven, and all the proud, yea, and all that doeth wickedly, shall be as stubble, and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of Hosts, that it, shall leave them neither root nor branch.* Malachi iv, 1.

Therefore, let me intreat you, as you tender your happiness, not to defer your repentance till old age ; for we see by experience, that not one in a thousand that takes that course doth ever at-

tain unto it. The rich man, in the gospel, promised himself many years to live in ease, mirth, and fullness, when he had not one night longer to live : So, many persons falsely promise themselves the age of many years, when the thread of their lives is drawn to an end. The prophet Jeremiah ascribes the cause of the Jews sin and calamities to this, That they remembered not their latter end. And as touching this unhappy gentleman whom, we fear, is now under the Almighty's vengeance, tho' we ought not positively to judge in such cases ; if he had lived a more sober and temperate life, and instead of spending his precious time in drinking, and other lewd courses, had spent it in reading the scriptures, and hearing good sermons, then he had never come to such a dreadful end ; and we hope this terrible example will be a sufficient warning to all wicked, drunken and prophane persons, how they dare to provoke God in such an audacious manner. — Sometimes being disguised in liquor, he would make it a frolic to go to hear a sermon, making sport at the minister's words, contradicting him, and making a banter of what he heard among his lewd company : But in the midst of his prophane idoltary, the judgments of God overtook him. *Those that murmur against the minister and teacher of God's word, murmur against God himself.* Exo. xvi, 8. As for all such wicked and blasphemous persons, that follow such lewd courses, it is the infinite mercy of God, that they are not instantly consumed, and immediately sunk into those flames that

never have an end, where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. To the intent that others may take timely warning of that beastly sin, of drunkenness, it is this day preached before you, and shall be published for the use of many more. The first we find in scripture guilty of this sin, is Noah; a little before he had seen the world, except eight persons, destroyed by the flood; and then what was the consequence? why he, unseemingly exposed his nakedness, and gave occasion to his youngest son, to deride and despise him, which caused him to lay a grievous curse upon him, which had not been, if the sin had not happened.

Therefore let me earnestly intreat you to think upon your latter end, and prepare yourselves for eternal happiness. Pray to God to give you grace, and keep you from all temptations.

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Love of God be with you all evermore.

We whose names are bereunto j.t, do certify this relation to be true, and desire that it may be published, as a timely warning to all people.

Sir Henry Betterton,

Sir John Farrington,

Humphry Broom,

Samuel Fisher,

Robert Ashford,

James Jefferies,

John Bently, Esqs;

E I N I S

